

D/DS11/10/6/5

APS/S of S (Hrc' Dug (P))

Copy to:

AUS(D Staff)
Head of DS12
DDofOps (RoW)
DS5
DS8
FCO Defence Dept - Mr Pearce

FALKLAND ISLANDS - INFORMING NATO

1. Attached as agreed by Head of DS12 and you, are draft paragraphs to insert into the text of remarks for the Secretary of State's address to DPC colleagues. Might I suggest that these paragraphs are inserted in paragraph 4 after the words "understandable interest and concern" and preceded by the following amended version of the sentences at the end of paragraph 7: "You will know from these contacts - at least in broad terms - the scale and pattern of our defence operations in the South Atlantic. I do not think now is the time for me to give you a detailed description of these but I thought that I should report some main features."
2. The paragraphs are classified secret. This is because they disclose some of the details of our operational dispositions, since the Secretary of State's DPC colleagues would doubtless appreciate being taken into our confidence in this way. I understand that the Secretary of State will make his remarks in the Restricted Session, and that this classification should not therefore present any problems.
3. I also attach an outline chronology which the Secretary of State may wish to use as an aide-memoire.

3 May 1982

Tom McKane

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Encs.

To be inserted in Paragraph 4, after "understandable interest and concern"

... From the outset we have been conscious of the need to ensure that both the timing and the nature of our military operations in the South Atlantic would strengthen our diplomatic efforts to achieve early Argentine withdrawal from the Falkland Islands. Our aim has been to use the minimum force necessary to meet this objective. The announcement on 7 April of a Maritime Exclusion Zone around the Falkland Islands and on 28 April of a Total Exclusion Zone were part of this strategy. They were essentially deterrent measures providing full warning of our military intentions so that Argentina would have time to withdraw her forces from the area and suitably adjust her position in negotiations. But as the military exchanges during the last week have shown, Argentina has chosen to ignore the Exclusion Zone and thereby incur damage to her forces.

5. The decision to retake South Georgia was also consistent with our overall aims. It was designed to provide a moderate but unambiguous demonstration of our resolve and so to convince Argentina that she should withdraw from the Falkland Islands so that meaningful negotiations on the future of the Islands could take place. Repossession of South Georgia suited this purpose because it was only lightly defended. A number of RN ships were involved in this operation, including the destroyer, ANTRIM, the frigate, PLYMOUTH, and the support ship, TIDESPING. Special forces were also involved in reconnaissance activity some days in advance of the main landing on 25 April. Despite the fact that the Argentine submarine, Santa Fe, had landed reinforcements, and had to be neutralised prior to the landing, the operation was a complete and virtually bloodless success.

6. Operations were also carried out at the end of last week to ensure

that we would be able to enforce the Total Exclusion Zone effectively. The closure of Port Stanley airfield on the Falkland Islands was crucial to enable us to achieve air superiority in the Zone, and thereby maintain a survivable Task Force while cutting off airborne military supplies to the Argentine garrison. That air operation was carried out by a single Vulcan bomber from Ascension Island, refuelled in flight by Victor tankers, followed up by low-level raids by Sea Harriers from HMS HERMES, sitting some 90 miles offshore. No British aircraft were lost. There were no British casualties and both the permanent airfield at Port Stanley, and a temporary one elsewhere on the Islands have been rendered inoffensive. To my knowledge there were 16 Argentine casualties.

7. The way in which the RN ships and aircraft have responded to these challenges are, I believe, evidence of the high level of quality and readiness of the British forces. Mounting a maritime operation 8000 miles from home is difficult but by ensuring that the resupply lines are adequate - and this, I believe, means making the maximum use of merchant shipping - it can be done successfully.

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FALKLAND ISLANDS CRISIS - OUTLINE OF CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

1. 1 April - President of UN Security Council calls for restraint and President Reagan speaks to President Galtieri in similar terms.
2. 2 April - Argentine invasion of Falkland Islands.
3. 3 April - Argentine invasion of South Georgia.
4. 3 April - UN Security Council Resolution 502 adopted by majority of 10 to 1. Calls for immediate Argentine withdrawal; immediate end to hostilities; and a diplomatic solution.
5. 7 April - HM Ambassador in Washington discusses possible US mediation with Haig.
6. 7 April - HMG announces Maritime Exclusion Zone to take effect from 12 April.
7. 8 April - Argentine announcement of exclusion zone extending 200 km from Argentine coast and similar zones around FI and South Georgia.
8. 9 April - Haig in London for talks with HMG.
9. 10 April - EC imposes ban on all imports from Argentina; and ban on arms exports.
10. 10-11 April - Haig in Buenos Aires.
11. 12 April - Haig returns to London.
12. 13 April - Haig returns to Washington.
13. 14 April - PM reaffirms UK's position in the House, viz: wishes of FI people should determine future of the Islands. Impossible for free expression of these wishes until complete withdrawal of Argentine forces.
14. 15 April - Haig returns to Argentina for final time. HMG stresses to Haig that any US negotiated settlement must include concrete arrangements for protection against any repetition of Argentine aggression.
15. 15 April - President of UN Security Council agrees that the Council will stand aside as long as Haig mission continues.
16. 16 April - Reagan/Galtieri telephone conversation; US Government calls for restraint and flexibility.
17. 16 April - Argentina continues to refuse ICRC access to FI. This refusal kept secret at ICRC request.

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18. 18 April - US press reports of Argentine Government's difficulties with Trade Unions and political opposition.
19. 19 April - Haig returns Washington having decided that it is not possible to extract more from Argentina. Latest proposals passed to London.
20. 19 April - Argentina seeks International Atomic Energy Authority support over alleged nuclear weapons in British ships (breach of Treaty of Tlatelolco). UK refutes possibility of using nuclear weapons.
21. 19 April - ICRC request to visit FI turned down again.
22. 21 April - Foreign Secretary summarises latest Argentine/Haig proposals to EC: "... Argentine withdrawal would be delayed, Argentine voice in administration of FI would be disproportionate ... and future negotiations would be organised in such a way that could only prejudice the principles of sovereignty and self-determination."
23. 21 April - RN ships off South Georgia - recce parties landed.
24. 22 April - Foreign Secretary arrives Washington.
25. 23 April - Argentine submarine, Santa Fe, assessed to be in vicinity of South Georgia.
26. 24 April - Foreign Secretary returns London.
27. 25 April - Santa Fe attacked off South Georgia. UK forces take Grytviken.
28. 27 April - Since insufficient support was forthcoming at OAS, Argentina does not invoke Rio Treaty. On question of sovereignty over FI Argentina wins support of OAS with 17 votes to 9.
29. 27 April - Non Aligned Movement express support for Argentine claims to sovereignty.
30. 27 April - NATO Permreps meeting. Luns expresses satisfaction at retaking of South Georgia. Canada supports UK position but calls for peaceful solution.
31. 27 April - Haig puts further proposals to Argentina.
32. 28 April - UK announces Total Exclusion Zone to take effect from 30 April.
33. 29 April - Argentina declares 200 mile exclusion zones off Argentina and around FI.
34. 29 April - Argentina rejects parts of Haig proposals but stalls for time by seeking clarification of certain details.
35. 30 April - TEZ takes effect at 1100 GMT.

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- 36. 30 April - CostaMendez visits UN Secretary General and then declares Argentina's willingness to comply with Resolution 502, "in its entirety". This leads British Foreign Secretary to comment that UK needs to see concrete signs of a shift in Argentine position.
- 37. 30 April - US Government announces failure of Haig negotiations; sanctions against Argentina which restrict bank lending and stop all arms exports; and offer of material support to UK.
- 38. 1 May - Vulcan and Sea Harriers bomb Stanley and Goose Green airstrips to deny their use to Argentina. Argentina had failed to comply with British warning to remove military aircraft from FI.
- 39. 1 May - 1 Mirage and 1 Canberra shot down by Sea Harriers following attack on Battle Group. 1 further Mirage shot down by our forces.
- 40. 2 May - Argentine cruiser torpedoed on edge of TEZ.
- 41. 3 May - 2 Argentine naval auxiliaries hit by missiles fired from RN Lynx helicopters following attack (missed) on RN Sea King.

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